

**MANSFIELD DOWNTOWN PARTNERSHIP  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
Thursday, March 3, 2011**

**Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.  
1244 Storrs Road**

**4:00 PM**

**Minutes**

Present: Steve Bacon, Harry Birkenruth, Tom Callahan, Matthew Hart, Dennis Heffley, David Lindsay, Philip Lodewick, Frank McNabb, Toni Moran, Betsy Paterson, Christopher Paulhus, Alex Roe, Steve Rogers, Bill Simpson, Antoinette Webster and David Woods

Staff: Kathleen Paterson, Cynthia van Zelm

**1. Call to Order**

Philip Lodewick called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

**2. Opportunity for Public to Comment**

There was no public comment.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Steve Bacon made a motion to approve the February 3, 2011 Board meeting minutes and February 8, 2011 Special Board meeting minutes. Bill Simpson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

**4. Committee Reports**

**Finance and Administration**

Tom Callahan referenced the Board discussion from December 2010 on the current development agreement between the Partnership and Storrs Center Alliance. Discussion ensued in December on updating the 2004 agreement. Mr. Callahan noted that due to the seven years that have passed, many of the material objectives (completing the Municipal Development Plan, etc.) had been completed. In addition, the economic situation had changed.

Mr. Callahan said as Finance Chair he worked with Executive Director Cynthia van Zelm, Partnership attorney Lee Cole-Chu, and Howard Kaufman with Storrs Center Alliance on changes to the agreement. He referenced a memo put together by Mr. Cole-Chu on the nature of the changes, which was distributed to the Board.

Mr. Callahan said the team did not get to a conclusion until this past Tuesday, after the Finance and Administration Committee had met. Consequently, the proposed changes and Mr. Cole-Chu's memo were circulated to the Finance Committee for its review. Mr. Callahan said based on the Committee's feedback, he believes he has its endorsement, and is now seeking the Board's endorsement.

Mr. Callahan said the new agreement allows for the Finance and Administration Committee and the Board to review Storrs Center Alliance's business plan on a phase by phase basis vs. as an entire plan for the project. As the project will be phased, it makes sense to have the review mirror the phases.

In addition, Storrs Center Alliance asked that it only be responsible for paying for third-party public hearing costs and reasonable attorney fees vs. other consultant costs. This was agreed to by the negotiating team.

With respect to the right of first refusal, if Storrs Center Alliance defaults, the Partnership wanted to retain this right, but agreed that land on which Storrs Center Alliance had obtained a certificate of occupancy for all residential units and half of the non-residential space, would be exempt. The Partnership's goal was to make sure that phases of the project are completed.

Mr. Callahan noted that Phase 1A and 1B were inadvertently exempted from the right of first refusal but this was not the intent of the negotiating team. This will need to be corrected.

Mr. Callahan suggested a motion to authorize the Board President to sign the agreement consistent with the changes presented by Mr. Cole-Chu as modified to strike the reference to exemption of Phases 1A and 1B in Article XII, Section 13.2(d). Mr. Simpson made the motion. Chris Paulhus seconded the motion. Harry Birkenruth confirmed that the changes were consistent with what the Finance and Administration Committee had discussed. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. van Zelm reported that the Committee had approved a relocation claim from Jao Praya restaurant.

Ms. van Zelm said the Committee was continuing to discuss its current and future office space. The Board expressed its long-term goal for the Partnership to be located in Storrs Center.

Mr. Birkenruth said the Committee is seeking names for the AJ Pappanikou Volunteer of the Year Award.

## **5. Director's Report**

Ms. van Zelm said a public update to the community is being discussed for mid to late April.

## **6. Storrs Center Action Items**

Ms. van Zelm said the Storrs Center team is working toward demolition of the former UConn Publications building with a goal to demolish in May.

She said BL Companies is expected to submit 90 percent design of Storrs Road and Dog Lane to CDOT on March 18. The goal is to bid the project in April with a start in June.

The University will be conducting its sewer lining work in Storrs Road beginning in May.

Ms. van Zelm said a public information meeting on the Storrs Road enhancement project will be held on March 28 at 7:15 pm in the Town Council chambers.

She said building permits should be ready to submit to the Town for Phases 1A and 1B in April.

## **7. Mansfield Economic and Community Development**

Town Manager Matt Hart said the Town does not have an economic development department. To address the current economic climate and the fact that state revenues are not at the levels they were in prior years, he felt it was important to take a holistic view of economic development.

He noted that with the retirement of long time Director of Planning Greg Padick, the new position will be the Director of Planning and Development which will entail economic and community development responsibilities.

Mr. Hart used a Power Point presentation to review the Town's efforts to date and on-going goals. He noted that business retention is key.

Mr. Lodewick asked about the relationship with the Mansfield Business and Professional Association (MBPA). Mr. Hart said this will continue to be a key relationship and the goal is to present a similar presentation to the MBPA after the presentation to the Partnership and the Town Council.

Mr. Hart thanked Partnership Special Projects Coordinator Kathleen Paterson for adding an economic and community development section with projects and resources listed to the Town website.

He said the Town will continue to work with the Windham Region Council of Governments on its regional initiatives. In addition, the Storrs Center and Four Corners projects are listed in the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy along with initiatives from UConn.

Mr. Hart said the Town is developing a relationship with the UConn Technology Incubation Program to help provide information on possible office space and resources that can help with incubator businesses.

Mr. Hart said he and Ms. van Zelm had started to conduct some business visitations. He noted that he and Ms. van Zelm had met with Kevin Bouley at NERAC and in response to how Mansfield can help businesses, Mr. Bouley said the key is for the Town to focus on continuing to make the Town attractive regarding its quality of life. This will attract employers.

Mr. Birkenruth said from his perspective the most important action the Town can take is to treat businesses fairly and efficiently.

Ms. K. Paterson reviewed the welcome letter being sent to new businesses from the Town and Partnership as well as the business packet to accompany the business visitations. It includes information from both the Tolland and Windham Chambers of Commerce, the NE Economic Alliance, and the Mansfield Community Center business membership program.

Mr. Hart said the Town is continuing to improve its GIS (Geographic Information System) capabilities and GIS can be used to view available sites for development, etc.

Dennis Heffley said the UConn map library is also working on its GIS so the Town may want to coordinate with UConn.

Mr. Hart said the Town also recently joined CERC's (Connecticut Economic Resource Center) SiteFinder program which is a web-based tool that allows developers to see available property in a community. The Town will list major parcels on this site.

Mr. Hart said most of the future efforts will be a Town responsibility with his suggestion that the Partnership assist as able. He said he wants to continue to work with UConn on its incubator program and other economic development efforts.

Mr. Hart said his goal is to look at a one stop shop for the permitting process led by the current staff and the new Director of Planning and Development.

He said he also hopes to develop a protocol for review of economic and community development inquiries over the next year. He expects that the Partnership would continue its role of being the lead contact for questions about space in Storrs Center.

Mr. Birkenruth commended Mr. Hart for his leadership and said the Town's efforts in economic and community development are much needed. He asked Mr. Hart if he had benchmarked other towns. Mr. Hart said that he and others have researched what other towns are doing in economic and community development and will continue to do so.

Steve Rogers also expressed his enthusiasm. He asked about sites where an incubator business site could locate. Mr. Hart said the goal is to identify "ready" sites and to prepare sites if they are not ready, to the extent feasible.

Betsy Paterson suggested putting together a staff team to look at streamlining the process as suggested by Mr. Hart.

Steve Bacon suggested reaching out to incoming UConn President Susan Herbst about some of the economic development initiatives in Georgia. He encouraged looking at economic and community development from a regional perspective.

Frank McNabb and Mr. Simpson emphasized the importance of business in Connecticut being a priority at the state government level.

Antoinette Webster thanked Mr. Hart for his excellent presentation. She emphasized the importance for businesses to have a point person in local government.

## **8. Four Corners Sewer and Water Study Advisory Committee Update**

Ms. van Zelm said the Committee's consultant is looking at possible sites along the Willimantic River for water supply. The area will need to be studied more thoroughly in the spring.

## **9. Committee Reports continued**

### Advertising and Promotion

Ms. van Zelm and Ms. K. Paterson provided the report as Dean Woods had previously left the meeting. Ms. van Zelm said the Committee had discussed ideas for the spring newsletter.

Ms. K. Paterson also reported that Winter Fun Day was held on February 12. It was well attended and received good press.

She reported that the Committee also discussed its increased role as Storrs Center moves forward.

### Business Development and Retention

Steve Rogers said that Matt Raynor had resigned from the Committee.

He said that Howard Kaufman from LeylandAlliance had sat in on the last Committee meeting. Mr. Kaufman discussed the commercial leasing process and noted that letters of intent will not be announced, only leases, as Leyland is moving toward the leasing stage. Mr. Kaufman had said that a diverse group of tenants are being courted.

### Festival on the Green

Ms. Paterson said that the *Festival* Committee will be working with the UConn School of Fine Arts to piggyback on their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events in September. Consequently, the *Festival* will be on September 25<sup>th</sup>, two weeks later than usual.

Ms. Paterson said a Celebrate Mansfield Weekend will still take place including Vintage Mansfield wine tasting, and Picnicpalooza.

Rod Rock with the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts will help with music for the *Festival*.

She said due to construction activity, the *Festival* will be located in the front parking lots of EO Smith High School.

Mr. Birkenruth suggested that EDR have a presence at the *Festival*.

#### Membership Development

Frank McNabb said current membership is at 294 members with \$15,600 in dues. He said there was a good deal of interest at the Partnership table at Gampel at a prior UConn women's basketball game. The Partnership will have a table again this weekend at a men's game.

David Lindsay said he thought there was more knowledge from UConn students about the Partnership and Storrs Center.

#### Planning and Design

Mr. Bacon said the Committee met on February 15 at the Community Center. Sam Gardner with GW&G Architects presented an early design on the intermodal center and Norm Goldman with Desman Associates did the same for the parking garage.

Mr. Bacon said that members of the Town's Transportation Advisory Committee and Town Council attended the meeting.

There were concerns about making sure the facilities were secure and well lit.

The plan is for the Windham Region Transit District, UConn, and the new MegaBus buses to stop at the intermodal center.

There was also emphasis on the intermodal center being a hub for bicycling.

Mr. Bacon said the Committee will meet again on March 15 at 5 pm.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to go into Executive Session according to CGS §1-200(6) (A). Toni Moran seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **10. Executive Session - Personnel**

Present: Mr. Bacon, Mr. Birkenruth, Mr. Callahan, Mr. Hart, Mr. Heffley, Mr. Lindsay, Mr. Lodewick, Mr. McNabb, Ms. Moran, Ms. Paterson, Ms. Roe, Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Simpson

Also Present: Ms. van Zelm

The Board and Cynthia van Zelm discussed her performance evaluation.

**11. Adjourn**

Mr. Birkenruth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Heffley seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 5:45 pm.

*Minutes taken by Cynthia van Zelm.*